

# Maximizing Quality Time With Your Family

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You may be spending more time with your family lately thanks to COVID-19. Otherwise, with a long workday and commute, you might hardly see them during the week. This could be an opportunity to become more intentional about quality time.

Some studies have found that the average family spends less than 40 minutes together on weekdays. However, they usually try to catch up on weekends when family time expands to about 3 hours.

Other studies show that **even a few minutes of togetherness sprinkled throughout the day can strengthen family ties.** Small gestures make a big difference.

Find out more about how to nurture the important relationships in your life. Try these techniques for maximizing quality time.

## Maximizing Quality Time with Your Children

Your kids are going to consume your time one way or another. Build them up now to avoid bailing them out later. **Proactive parenting will help your children to become more resilient and make wiser choices.**

Use these strategies:

1. **Pay attention.** Boost your child's self-esteem and social skills by giving them your undivided attention. Turn the TV off. Put aside thoughts about sales reports and water bills. Listen closely to what they have to say and show your enthusiasm.

2. **Dine together.** Enjoy family dinners. Linger around the table or plan activities for afterwards. You can make an evening out of renting a movie or doing crafts.
3. **Play and dance.** Too many structured activities can crowd out time for independent play. **Leave room in your schedule for laughter and silliness.**
4. **Have deep conversations.** Earn your child's trust. They'll be more likely to confide in you when they're struggling. You can also use news stories and movies as prompts to discuss important issues.
5. **Go on vacation.** Use your personal leave time. Family outings create lasting memories, and you may feel more relaxed away from home.

### **Maximizing Quality Time with Your Partner**

Does your partner seem more like your roommate sometimes? It's natural for the honeymoon phase to pass, but **you can revitalize your relationship.** In fact, you can apply many of the same communication skills you use with other family and friends.

#### **Try these techniques:**

1. **Schedule date nights.** Aim for at least one date night a month when you can focus on being a couple. If you're too tired to plan a night out, it's okay to stay home as long as you do something more fun than working on your taxes.
2. **Find a joint project.** Shared interests draw you closer together too. Team up on a home improvement job or take a scuba diving class.
3. **Support each other.** Ordinary kindness can be as romantic as love letters and flowers. Bring your spouse a cup of coffee while they're working at home. Send them an encouraging text on their way to a dentist appointment.

## Maximizing Quality Time with Yourself

Your relationship with yourself counts too. **When you honor your needs, you increase your capacity to care for your loved ones.**

**Keep these tips in mind:**

- 1. Work out. An active lifestyle is essential for your wellbeing.** You'll also be serving as a positive role model for your kids.
- 2. Eat healthy.** Prepare nutritious meals and snacks for your family and yourself. Give your kids age-appropriate kitchen tasks so they can pitch in and start forming wholesome habits.
- 3. Sleep well.** Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. You'll be a more effective parent when you're well rested.

With enough planning and effort, you can share more quality time with the ones you love. Strengthening your connections brings more happiness and stability into your life and creates a brighter future for your children.